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VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

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August/September 2011

President's Message

Scott Joseph, ex—KI6YYZ, now KF5MGM

As many of you know I retired from the Air Force after 23 years of active duty over the summer. I was able to gain employment in Greenville, TX with a government contractor called L-3 Communications in the Electronics Warfare community. Because of my retirement and new employment in Texas I am no longer able to fill the position of President of the W6VVR Vaca Valley Radio Club; effective immediately and reluctantly I must resign.

Many thanks to everyone that I came to know over the years in amateur radio communications in Vacaville. I hope to talk to you on the air sometime and stay in touch with you on Facebook. 73!

Vice President's Message

Marcus Maclean, KI6WDX

Hello and Welcome To All!

As your club VP, I will be assuming the duties of our recently departed el presidente (Scott Joseph, KI6YYZ) as he has retired from the Air Force and is now living in the State of Texas and all of the summer heat that goes along with it. The one thing that kinda "bums" me out is that we didn't get to talk to him before he left for Texas. On behalf of W6VVR, we wish you the best in your new career.

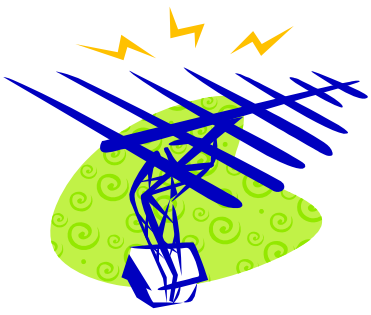
OK, has everyone who gets the monthly QST magazine read the article (QST- Sept. 2011) regarding EMCOMM and the disasters that happened in the deep south this past spring? It's a very interesting article and although some of you may have read this type of reporting in the past, I for one haven't and I found the article very interesting to say the least. Our club treasurer, Bob Hewitt, K6HEW was called upon by the American Red Cross to help out in this disaster and I believe a few others while he was there.

How effective is our club in the event we are called upon to provide assistance and respond to a disaster such as wild fire, a huge earthquake or a flooding situation? Does this club have trained radio operators to be relied upon by those public agencies needing assistance during a major disaster? Sure, we all have our trusty HT's (well some do and others may not), but are we ready to apply our knowledge and experience as knowledgeable & dependable radio operators in an emergency?

I would like to see our club set up emergency communication drills so that those radio operators needed in an emergency are able to meet the needs and the tasks involved in such a disaster event because earthquakes do happen, wild fires are sometimes devastating and the severe winter flooding conditions that has happened in the past and will likely happen again in the future!

Did everyone or anyone read the August QST magazine regarding the GeoFox Radiosport Rally? If there are to be young new potential radio operators coming into amateur radio now and in the future, I think that our club should look into the possibility to organize and put on a fox hunt event and encourage all young people (both girls and boys) to take part in such an event because there is simply more to life than just texting on the cell phone the other person. The hunt would provide a lot of interaction between those partaking in the event including communication and leadership skills that can be used later in life. There are many areas in which such an event like this could be run in here in Solano County.

This year's PacifiCon is to be held in the Santa Clara convention Center in of course, Santa Clara! Right in the heart of the Silicon Valley. I'm going to attend the antenna forum as well as the main event held on Saturday (it's also on Sunday, too) and I'm taking the XYL along. If anyone is wanting to go on either Friday (the antenna forum) or on Saturday or both, if you want to carpool there, let me know via these: 434-1267 freonfiz@pacbell. OK?



Well, time to close until next month's newsletter! 73!

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Swap Meet w/W6OMF

Save the Date!

Time: 0800 to 1100 local time, Saturday, September 2, 2011

Location: Larry and Sue Hogue's QTH, 7372 Paddon Way, Vacaville, CA 95688

Features: Buy and sell ham radio equipment among friends. Card checkers for DXCC, WAS, and VUCC. VE exam at 1100. Plenty of parking,

Texas Hams Injured at Field Day Site

On the morning of June 26, two Texas radio amateurs -- Danny Caldwell, AD5IP, of Kamay, and Mike Byrne, AE5CO, of Iowa Park -- received electric shocks as they took down an inverted V antenna. According to Wichita County Emergency Coordinator Larry Ballard, KE5KNV, the two were taking part in Field Day as part of the Wichita Amateur Radio Society (WARS).

"The Wichita Amateur Radio Society decided to terminate the participation in the exercise at 10 AM on Sunday, due to extreme heat and gusty wind conditions," Ballard told the ARRL. "Danny and Mike were injured while lowering the center pole of the inverted V dipole antenna to the ground. They were knocked to the ground when a guy wire, or the antenna lead-in, was hit with very high wind gust that blew it into a high [power] line wire." According to reports from witnesses, winds were gusting up to 40 miles per hour.

Ballard said 911 was called immediately and a rescue van arrived in a matter of minutes. The Fire Rescue Team determined that the two men were stable and they were transported to United Regional Hospital in Wichita Falls. Caldwell received CPR at the scene and was air lifted to Parkland Hospital in Dallas. Byrne was transported to Parkland later by ambulance. "This was the second year that the Wichita Amateur Radio Society had set up at Oscar Park in the City of Iowa Park for Field Day event," Ballard explained. "The antennas were located in the same location as the prior year, using the same safety practice of locating the antennas a safe distance from power lines and structures. The inverted V dipole antenna had yellow caution tape, marking guy wires and antenna end locations." Ballard said that Byrne was released from the hospital on Monday, June 27 and was resting at home. Caldwell, who suffered more serious injuries, is expected to be released on Tuesday, June 28.

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB—2011 ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Vacated
Vice President: Marcus Maclean, KI6WDX
Secretary: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Director: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6ZGB
Director: Tom Christman KE6MDM

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Marcus Maclean KI6WDX
Activities Chairperson: Board of Directors
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

Around the Shack

By Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

I' ve had a good DX summer so far along with a few minor contests thrown in to boot. Since we last met for our club barbeque, I've logged in 351 contacts on HF both CW and phone.

Among the notable entries were EK6TA in Armenia, JW/OE9SDV on Svalbard Island, TX8HA in New Caledonia, FP/W9OT on Saint Pierre & Miquelon Island, and RI1ANC in Antarctica. Summertime brings out all the island DXpeditions, except for Antarctica. No QSL cards yet, but they will arrive sometime in 2012 I'm sure.

I'm getting ready to dismantle the workstation in order to do a DIY flooring project. No, I'm not putting in rubberized safety decking, I'm tearing out carpet and vinyl to be replaced with new vinyl, carpet and hardwood flooring. I'll do the tear out and hardwood, then hire out the carpet and vinyl.

When it's complete, I'll put everything back in time for the California QSO Party the first weekend of October.

No county expedition this year, I'll be working CQP from home. I have a company convention in Las Vegas right up to the Saturday morning of the contest not arriving back home in time to deal with a field operation. Too bad, I love using my Buddipole and hanging out with the guys all weekend. Another time perhaps.

See you all at the Swap Meet! 73!

PACIFICON 2011, *The Great West Coast Ham Radio Convention*, returns to the San Francisco Bay Area and will again be sponsored by the Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club. **PACIFICON 2011** will take place Friday, October 14th through Sunday, October 16th, at the Marriott Santa Clara Hotel, 2700 Mission College Boulevard, Santa Clara, California 95054. (Telephone 408 988 1500)

A GENERAL ADMISSION ticket entitles you to the following: A full slate of outstanding forum presentations about a wide range of amateur radio related topics, a large Exhibit Hall filled with exciting product exhibits, a series of Amateur Television demonstrations, great QRP and HFpack activities, an outdoor Swap Meet, a One Day Technician Class to prepare you to pass the license examination at PACIFICON and get your first ham radio license, fun and informative T-Hunts, a chance to discuss important national amateur radio issues with top ARRL leaders, the Boy Scout Jamboree-On-The-Air **(scouts in uniform admitted free)**, chances to win great radios and other prizes throughout the convention, and perhaps the best part - interact and share information with lots of other amateur radio enthusiasts to further (or begin) your own knowledge and to advance the hobby.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS To ensure that convention guests will receive your negotiated room block rate, be sure to make your reservations by the **cut-off date of September 28th.** To make reservations online, click here ► **Marriott Reservations** and you will be automatically provided the negotiated room block rate of **$109 per night**. Guests may also call to make reservations by telephone. Dial 1-800-228-9290 and mention the group name **Pacificon Ham Radio Club 2011**. **FREE PARKING** A General Admission Ticket provides you with free parking for the entire weekend *with validation at the Front Desk*.**SOME EVENTS** have an additional charge beyond the $20 registration/admission cost. See pages on **Purchase Tickets**, **Breakfast Keynote**, **Banquet Saturday**, **Antenna Seminar** and **Ham License Exams**. **T**he Hotel will offer breakfast on Saturday in the outside courtyard from 7 to 9 am, as well as lunch at the outdoor pool from 11 am to 2 pm. Coffee and sweet rolls will be available in the bar starting at 6:00 am on Saturday and Sunday. A full Sunday buffet brunch is available in the Hotel restaurant.

► **Talk-In Station will use W6P call sign --- Primary Talk-In: 147.060 MHz (+) PL 100hz • 441.325 (+) PL 100hz**

Editor's Note—Pacificon has moved to Santa Clara after many years in San Ramon. It is common for club members to drive to Pacificon together and share a ride. This is a great one day event if you want to look around or a weekend event if you want to go to seminars.

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Vaca Valley Radio Club has proudly served the Northern Solano County Area since 1988. We pride ourselves in providing a friendly place for radio amateurs to meet and improve their operating skills.

We participate in public service events throughout the year and are always ready to assist with communications during times of emergency.

Browse our website for more information about our club. If you have any questions please email us at w6vvr@vacavalleyradio.net or call 707-448-5665 for assistance.

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988 General Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Vine Street Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

Have Some Fun in the ARRL September VHF QSO Party

September is here, and that means the VHF bands have been getting a workout. "If you've never experienced the fun of VHF+ operating, the ARRL September VHF QSO Party, the weekend of September 10 is a great place to start," said ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X. "With many HF radios now offering at least 6 meter SSB/CW capabilities -- and some offering 2 meters and 70 cm as well -- any amateur with a Technician class license or higher can experience long-haul communication on the VHF bands."

Kutzko explained that September is known for having good tropospheric propagation, as opposed to June, which is known for sporadic-E, or E-skip. "As the summer winds down, the sporadic-E season comes to an end and good tropo conditions flourish," he said. "A modest station -- say a 50 to 100 W SSB/CW transceiver and a small Yagi on 2 meters -- can, with favorable conditions, make QSOs several hundred miles away. If conditions are excellent, QSOs of more than 1000 miles are possible." When operating on VHF, hams usually state their Maidenhead grid squares as part of the exchange.

While there will be some contest activity on FM simplex -- especially near large population centers -- Kutzko said that most long-distance VHF+ QSOs are conducted via CW or SSB; this means you need to use horizontally polarized antennas: "A dipole for 6 meters is only 9 feet, 4 inches long and is an easy construction project," he explained. "Try to get the dipole in the air as high as possible, but even 15 feet off the ground will make some QSOs. If you have an antenna tuner that can handle 6 meters, you can try loading up another of your antennas on 6 meters with reasonable success. For 2 meters and 70 cm, a horizontal loop will work nicely for SSB and CW contacts." But remember: SSB and CW QSOs use horizontally-polarized antennas, while FM uses vertical polarization. You can find plans for simple VHF antennas at the Technical Information Service area of the ARRL Web site, in the Antennas chapter of The ARRL Handbook, or in the VHF and UHF Antenna Systems chapter of The ARRL Antenna Book.

Kutzko advises that hams need to be aware of a few things when operating on 6 meters: In the US and Canada, there is a calling frequency on 50.125 MHz USB. Many stations monitor this frequency to listen for band openings. Stations can call CQ on the calling frequency, but when somebody answers, the stations will need to find a new frequency on which to conduct their QSO. It is considered poor etiquette to monopolize the

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at:
http://vacavalleyradio.net

Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.47Ø MHz(-) pl 127.3
The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 8pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.2ØØ(-)

calling frequency for QSOs.

Activity will be centered on the calling frequencies of 50.125, 144.200, 222.100 and 432.100 MHz. But Kutzko said that most SSB activity will take place between 50.125-50.250 MHz, and CW between 50.100-50.080 MHz. If conditions are exceptional, Kutzko said that you may hear signals above 50.250. But he advised that the frequencies between 50.100-50.125 MHz are a *DX Window*, meaning it is reserved for QSOs between W/VE and DX stations, so please do not make stateside-to-stateside QSOs in that range.

Because VHF+ antennas are relatively small, Kutzko said that many amateurs like to operate from portable locations, such as a hilltop or a campground. "Find some high ground and put up an antenna; you'll be amazed at the difference operating from a high-terrain locale will make." Others operate the contest as a *rover*, operating from their car or truck while transmitting from multiple grid squares over the contest period. "Tracking rovers during the contest is almost as much fun as the contest itself," he said.

The ARRL September VHF QSO Party runs from 1800 UTC Saturday, September 10 through 0300 UTC Monday, September 12. Be sure to use those extra bands on your transceiver and get in on the fun you've been missing on 6 meters and up!

California QSO Party

CQP & improving your operating skills

From an operating point of view, what do Public Service, chasing DX or working contests have in common?

They all require accurate copy of information under stress – whether the stress of the moment, the adrenaline rush of rare DX or contest pile up, you have to accurately copy and relay information.

Entering a contest either casually to give some points or as a serious effort, Contesting provides a great learning experience for information copy "under fire".

The first weekend of October (October 1st & 2nd this year) sees the annual running of the California QSO Party – a great opportunity for stations in California because everyone else HAS TO WORK US!

We are the DX!

Whether you are a "big gun" with stacked yagis and 1500 watts, or a "little pistol" with 100 watts to a vertical or a wire antenna, everyone else in the world wants to work YOU to pick up one of the 58 counties in our state.

It's a lot of fun being on the receiving end of a pile up or searching & pouncing for other states and countries.

For California stations the object of the contest is to work as many stations as possible on SSB and CW. You can work the same station on each band and each mode for score credit.

Every US state and Canadian province you work counts as a multiplier – 58 total for us just like the number of counties in California.

Want to be really on the end of a pile up? Plan a "CApedition" to one of the rarer counties in California and the rest of the world will beat a path to your front end!

Low Power, High Power? CW or SSB? CQP is a fun contest for all.

CQP is sponsored by the Northern California Contest Club led by the NCCC "Green" team chaired by Rick "The Rhino" N6RNO as CQP Contest Chairman. A group of NCCC volunteers help with PR, planning county expeditions and processing all the logs to score the contest.

The last 10 years has seen a great increase in the number of logs submitted from the US, the DX world and (of course!) from California.

Last year we received just over 900 logs and with 2011 being the 45th Anniversary of CQP, we are making a big drive to get well over 1000 logs submitted.

Every station that submits a log is eligible for an achievement certificate and there are several operating categories where the leader receives a wooden CQP plaque for proud display on the shack wall.

Three categories are designed to encourage operation in contests: YL award, Youth (< 18) award and starting this year, a New California Contester's Award. This category is open to any operator that submits a log with at least 100 QSOs, made using either TriBander, Wire or Vertical antennas AND who have never submitted a log in any contest with more than 100 QSOs.

So if you've never entered a contest or have only dabbled in the past, this award category is for you!

If you work all 58 counties, you qualify for the "Worked All California Counties Award" sponsored by NCCC.

You can find the full rules and award details on the CQP web site at http://www.cqp.org.

Part time or full, home operator or an expedition to a new county, CQP is a blast!

Special Event Stations Mark 10th Anniversary of 9/11

In remembrance of those who died in the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, several Amateur Radio Special Event Stations are being planned.

- The Pentagon Amateur Radio Club, K4AF, will be on the air 7 AM-9 PM Saturday, September 10 (1100-0100 UTC, Saturday, September 10 through Sunday, September 11). Active operating frequencies will be posted during event on the K4AF website. This Special Event is to honor all those lost on September 11, 2001, with special remembrance of the 184 people who lost their lives at the Pentagon and on board American Airlines Flight 77.
- The Blair Amateur Radio Society, W3PN, will be operating N3U/FLT93 from September 8-15 in memoriam of United Flight 93 that crashed near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. This year's activity will take place during tenth anniversary and the Memorial Dedication for the Victims of United Flight 93. To receive a QSL card, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Blair Amateur Radio Society, W3PN, 112 E Wopsononock Ave, Altoona, PA 16601.
- The Northeast Wireless Radio Club, N2WC, will be on the air Sunday, September 11 from 12 noon until 6 PM EDT (1700-2300 UTC). NWRC members will be operating in the General class bands on Phone, CW and Digital; please check the clusters for frequency updates. You can receive a Special Event QSL card when you send a $2 donation to Northeast Wireless Radio Club, 213-37 39th Avenue, Suite 175, Bayside, NY 11361.
- The Kings County Repeater Association, KC2RA, will be on the air 9 AM-5 PM EDT (1300-2100 UTC) on Saturday, September 10. Look for KC2RA on 7.250 and 14.295 MHz, as well as EchoLink node 132967 (KC2LEB-R) and the KC2RA repeater at 146.430 (CTCSS 136.5). KC2RA members will be offering a special QSL card for the event. To receive a card, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to KC2RA 9/11 Memorial Event, PO Box 280288, Brooklyn, NY 11228-0288.
- The Symbol Technologies Amateur Radio Club, W2SBL, will be on the air September 10-11 on the following frequencies: 3.911, 7.240, 14.070 and 50.135 MHz, as well as D-STAR REF10C. STARC members will read the name of a person killed in the attacks with every QSO. A Special Event QSL card is available when you send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Symbol Technologies Amateur Radio Club, W2SBL, One Motorola Plaza, B-13, Holtsville, NY 11742.

The dates, times and frequencies of these Special Event Stations are listed as they were reported to the ARRL, and as such are subject to change. For a listing of all Special Event Stations, please see the ARRL Special Event Stations web page.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely — Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
Street: _____
City: _____Zip: _____
Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)
License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)
E-Mail Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues --------- $20.00 _____
Each Family Member -- $ 2.00 _____
Student ---------- $ 5.00 _____
Repeater/Autopatch donation --- _____
Call/Name badge -------- $10.00 _____
Optional ARRL membership
ARRL dues---------- $37.00 _____
Senior is 65 yr or older with one time proof on age.

Total---------- _____
Paid by CASH: ____ Check #_____
DATE:_____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143